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Klusek et al.

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(54) **DISHWASHER DOOR WITH MOVABLE DECORATIVE COVER**

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A47B 96/00	(2006.01)
A47B 96/20	(2006.01)

(52) **U.S. Cl.**

CPC ***A47L 15/4265*** (2013.01); ***A47B 96/00*** (2013.01); ***A47L 15/4257*** (2013.01); *A47B 2096/208* (2013.01); *A47L 15/42* (2013.01)

(58) **Field of Classification Search**

CPC .. A47L 15/4257; A47L 15/4265; A47L 15/42; A47B 96/00
USPC 312/228, 326, 311, 319.1, 319.2
See application file for complete search history.

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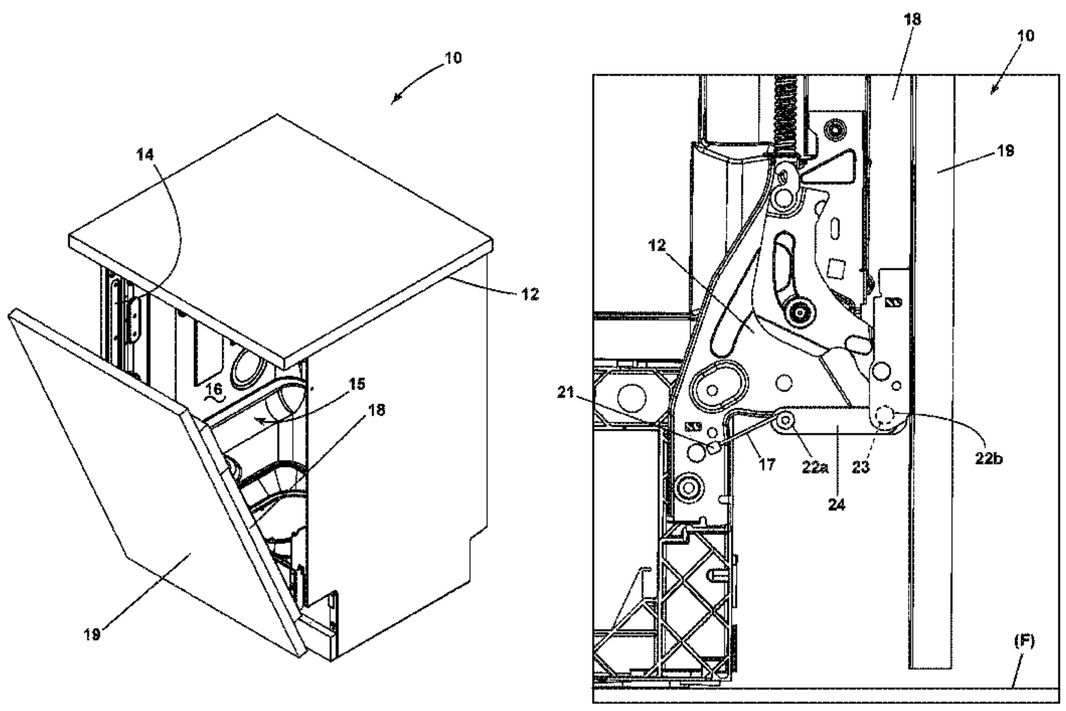
(57) **ABSTRACT**

A dishwasher comprises a chassis having a base, a tub supported on the base and at least partially defining a treating chamber having an access opening, a door having a door height extending between a door upper end and a door lower end, a hinge pivotally mounting the door to the chassis for pivotal movement between a closed position, wherein the access opening is closed, and an opened position, wherein the access opening is opened, a non-racking decorative cover having a cover height extending between a cover upper end and a cover lower end; and a slide assembly mounting the decorative cover to the door to move the decorative cover upwardly from a retracted position to an extended position as the door is pivoted from the closed position to the open position. The decorative cover height is greater than the door height such that the decorative cover lower end lies below the door lower end supporting the dishwasher when the door is in the closed position such that extending the decorative cover prevents the decorative cover lower end from contacting the chassis when the door is moved from the closed to the open position.

15 Claims, 7 Drawing Sheets



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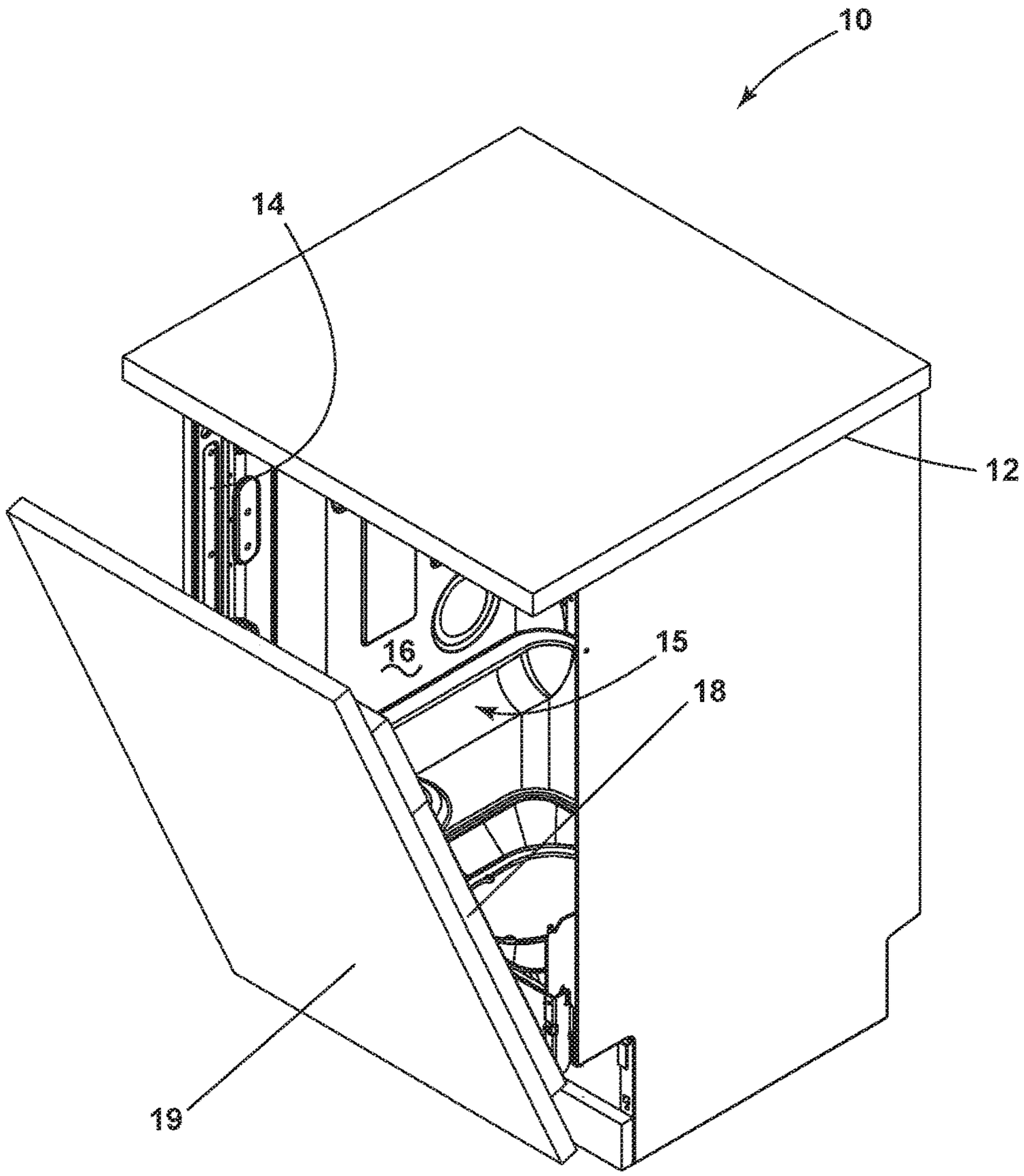

FIG. 1

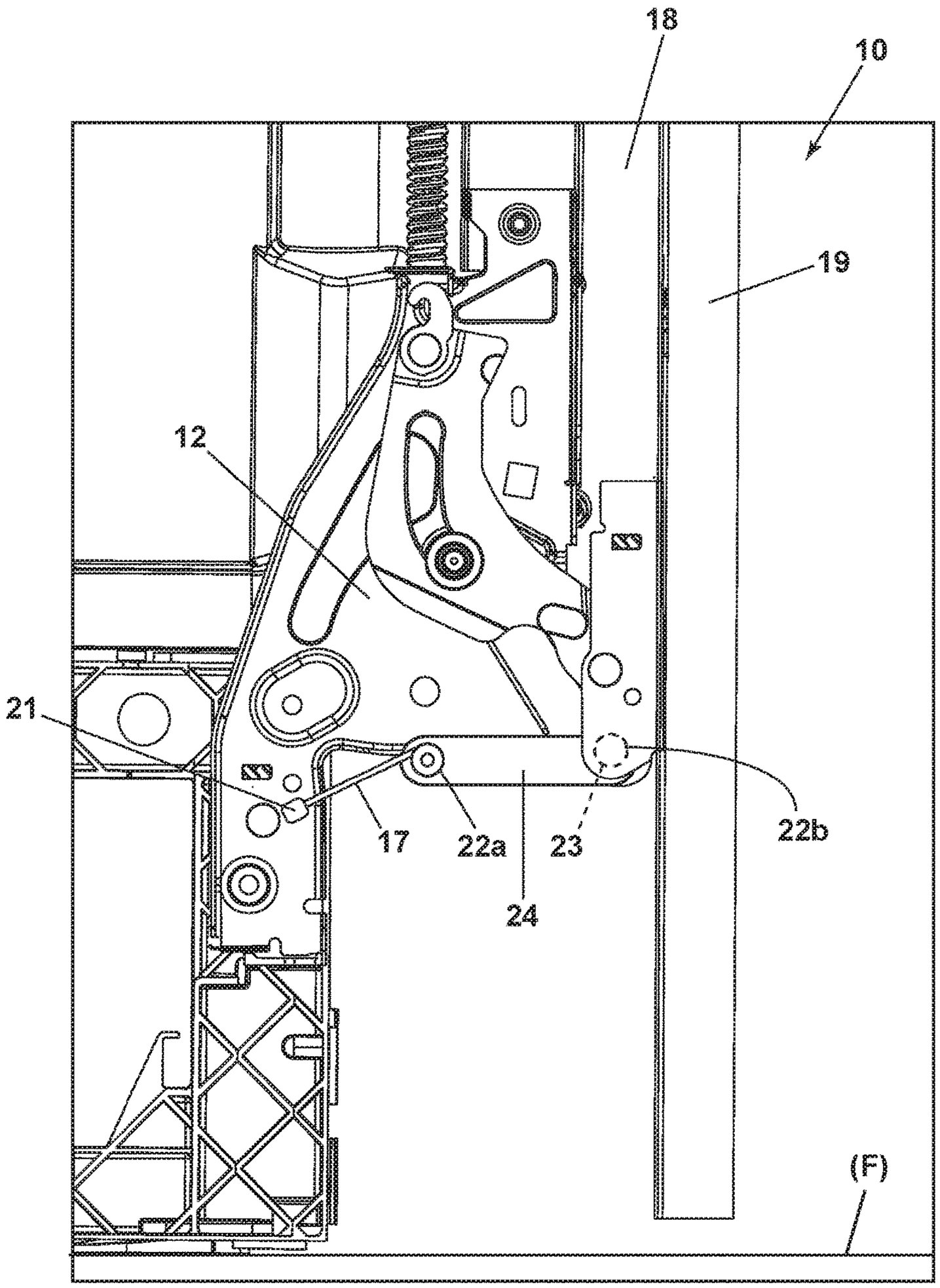

FIG. 2

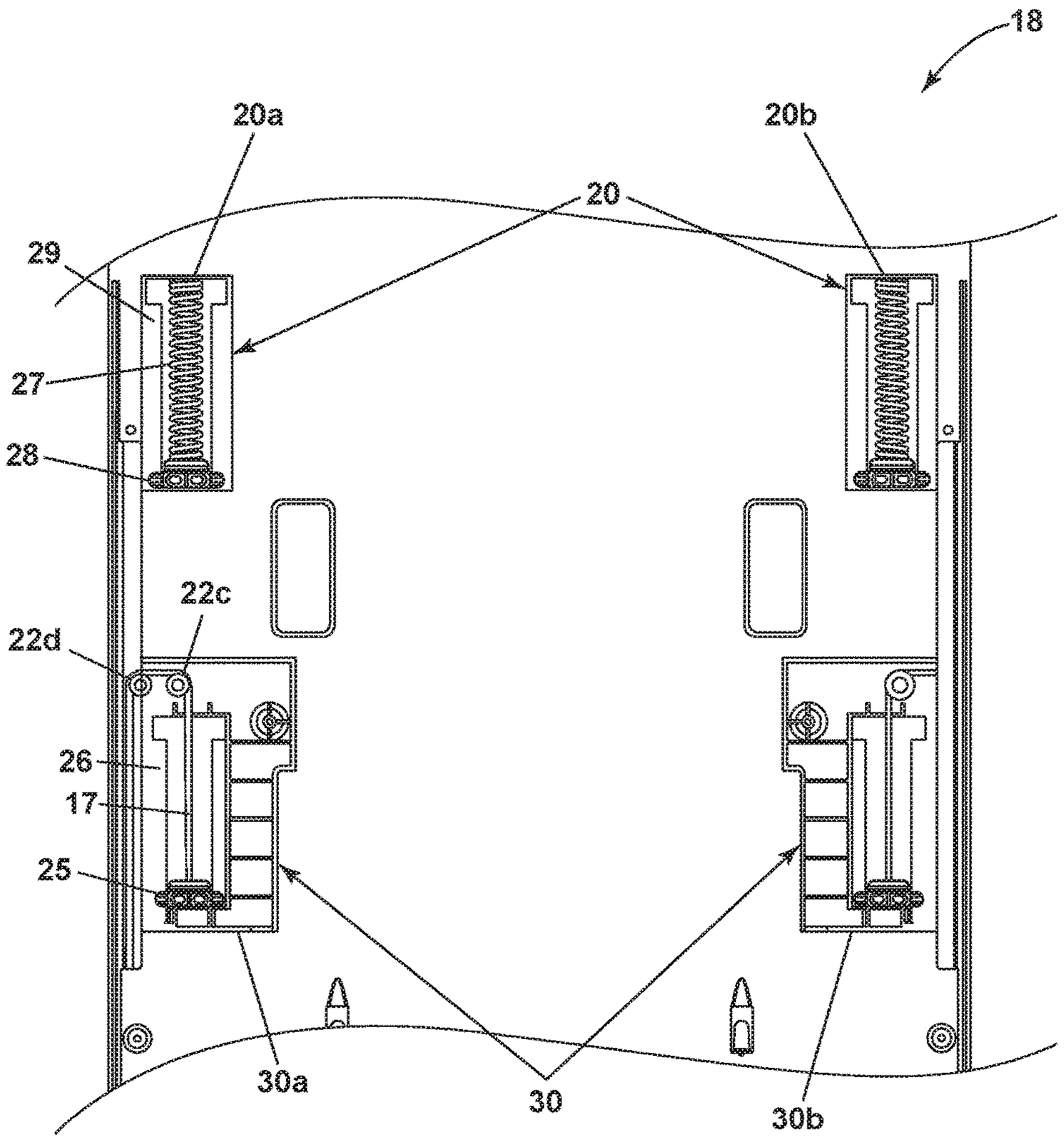

FIG. 3

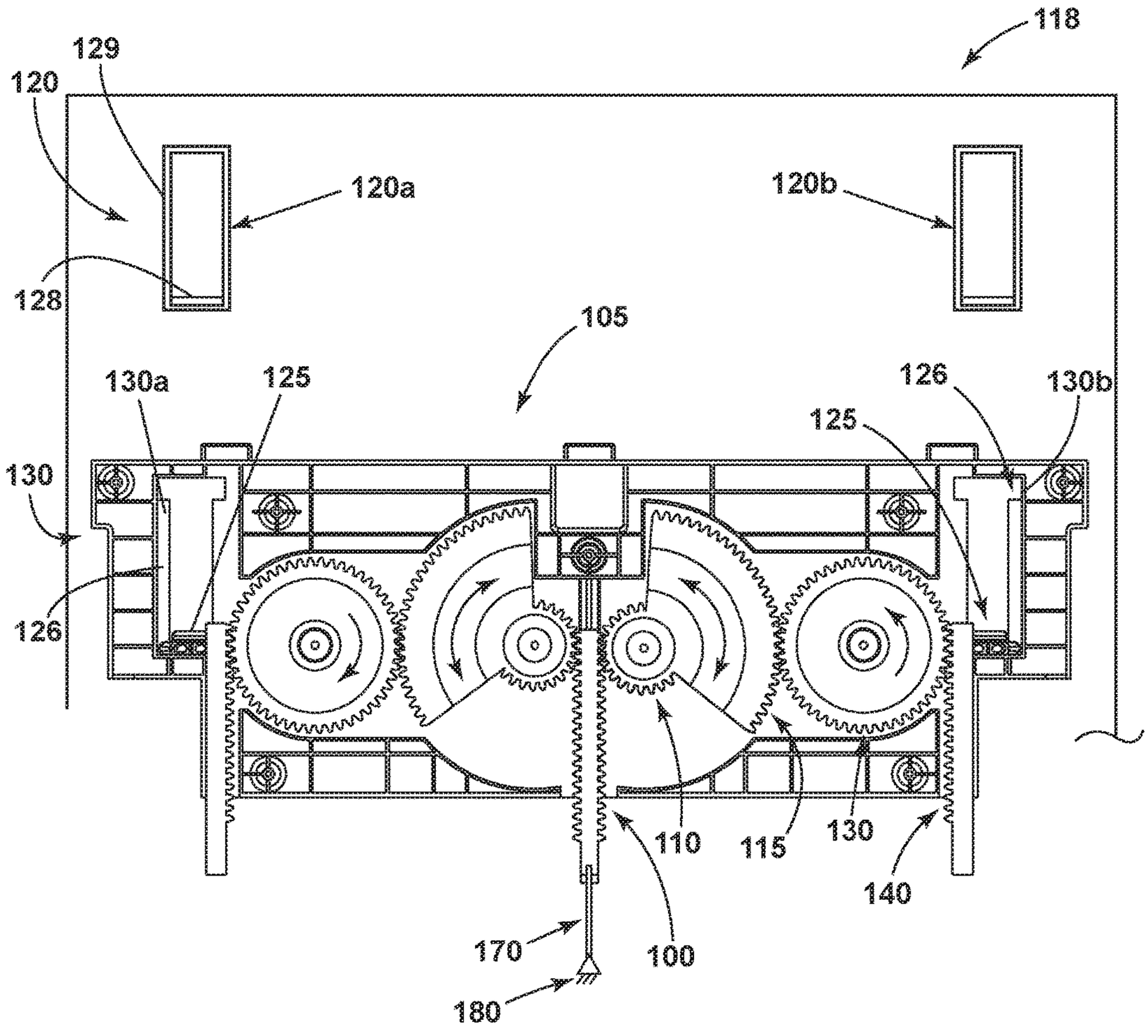
118
129
120
120a
120b
128
105
130a
125
126
130b
130
126
110
115
130
140
170
100
180

FIG. 4

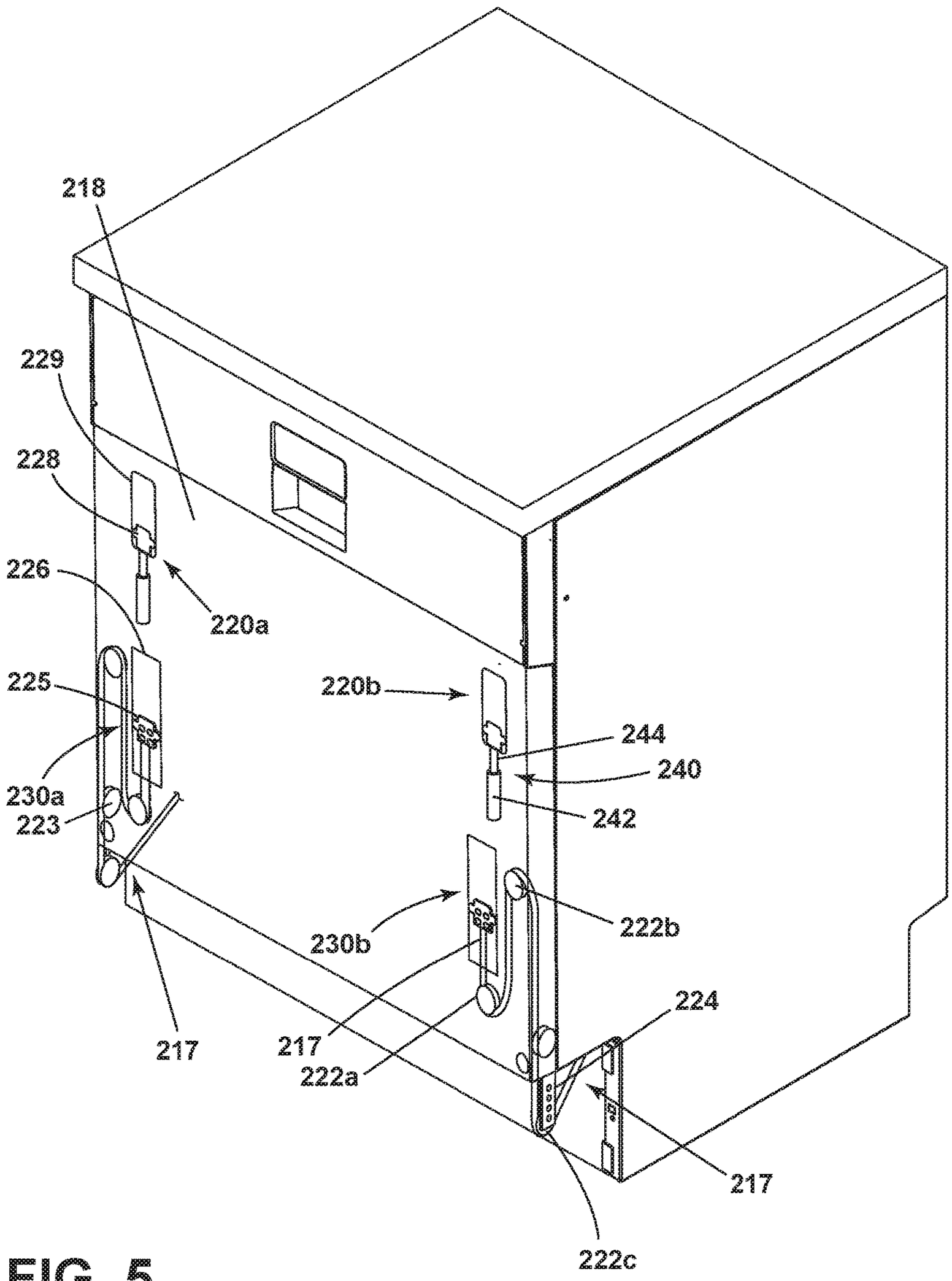
218
229
228
226
220a
225
220b
244
240
230a
223
242
230b
222b
224
217
217
222a
217
222c

FIG. 5

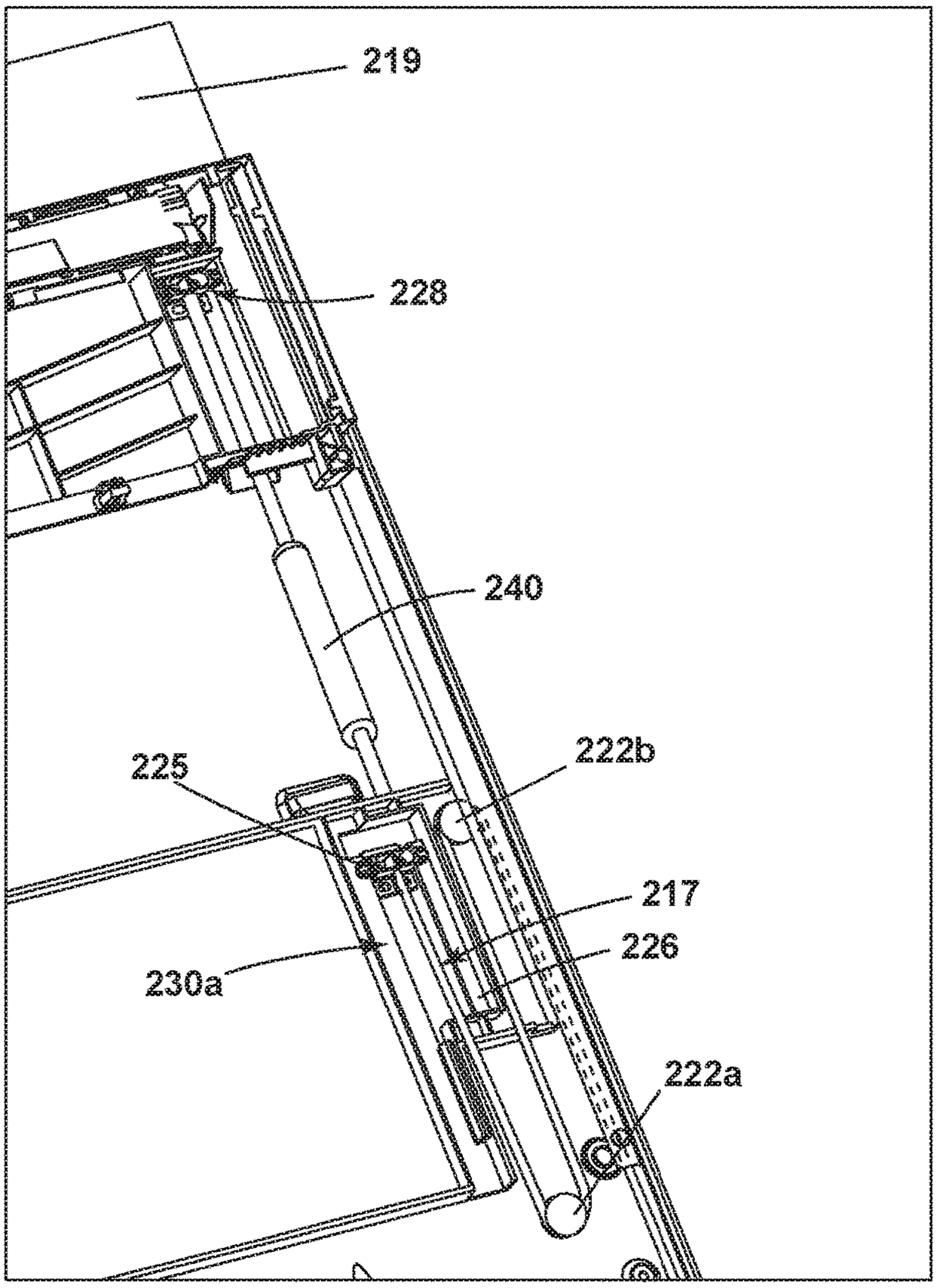

FIG. 6

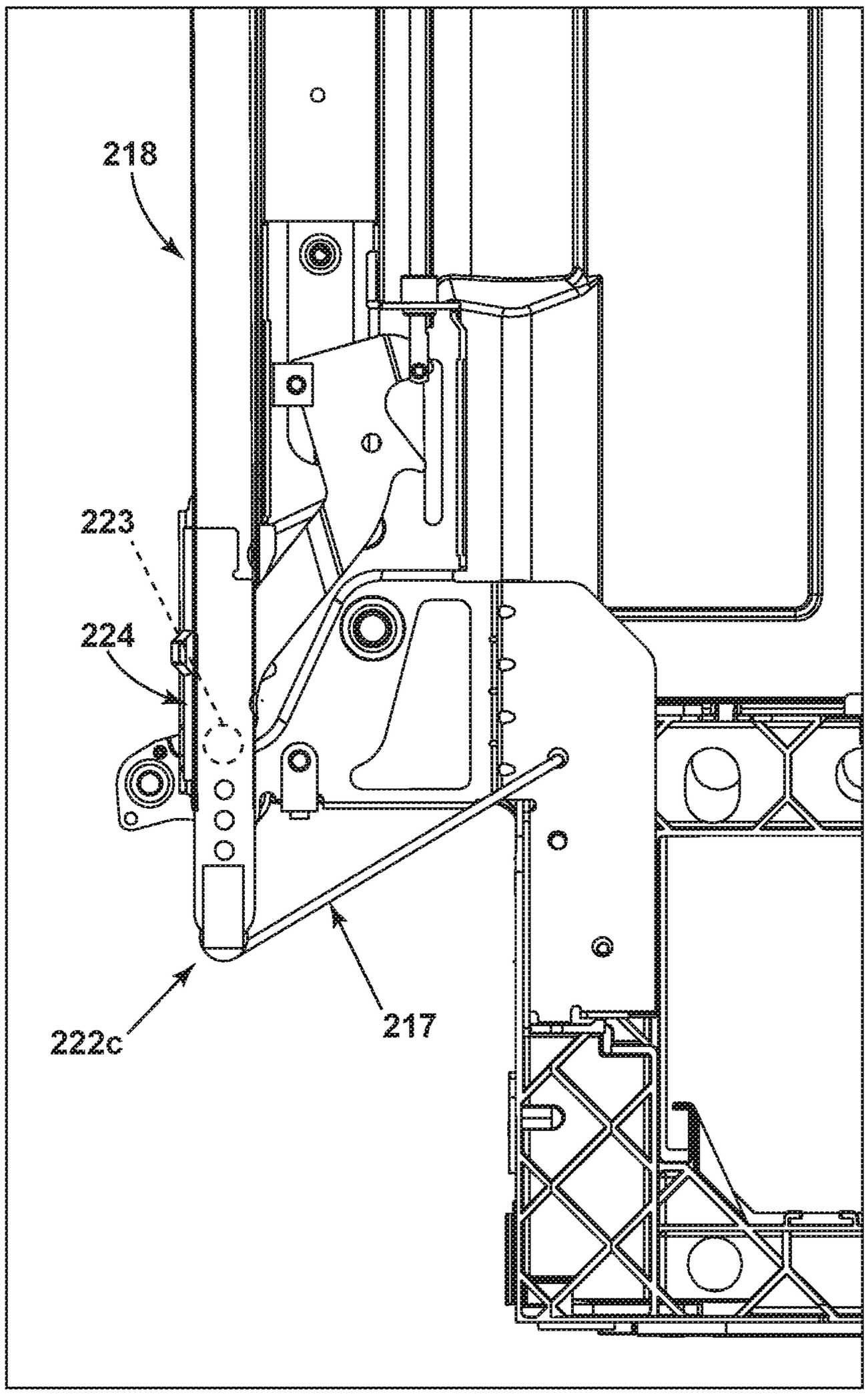

FIG. 7

DISHWASHER DOOR WITH MOVABLE DECORATIVE COVER

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

Many consumers are influenced by design and style trends. This influence extends to living environments. For example, consumers often remodel one or more rooms in their homes, or buy new appliances simply because they appear "dated". For kitchen appliances, consumers often want updated appliances or appliances that match the kitchen cabinetry, which can help the appliance blend in with the cabinets. In this regard kitchen appliances, including refrigerators and dishwashers, are available that have decorative front covers that can be adapted or modified to match kitchen cabinetry.

SUMMARY

In an exemplary embodiment, a dishwasher comprises a chassis having a base, and a tub supported on the base and at least partially defining a treating chamber having an access opening. A door having a door height extending between a door upper end and a door lower end is pivotally mounted to the chassis for pivotal movement between a closed position wherein the access opening is closed, and an opened position wherein the access opening is opened. A decorative cover having a cover height extending between a cover upper end and a cover lower end is mounted by a non-racking slide assembly to the door to move the decorative cover upwardly from a lowered to a raised position as the door pivots from the closed position to the open position. The cover height is greater than the door height such that the decorative cover lower end lies below the door lower end adjacent to the floor when the door is in the closed position. As the door is moved from the closed to the open position, the decorative cover is raised to prevent the decorative cover lower end from contacting the chassis or the floor.

In another exemplary embodiment, a dishwasher door assembly comprises a dishwasher door having a door height extending between a door upper end and a door lower end. A decorative cover having a cover height extending between a cover upper end and a cover lower end, wherein the cover height is greater than the door height such that the decorative cover lower end lies below the door lower end. A non-racking slide assembly mounts the decorative cover to the door to move the decorative cover upwardly from a lowered to a raised position. The slide assembly comprises a left slide mounting a left side of decorative cover to the door and a right slide spaced apart and axially aligned with the left slide and mounting a right side of the decorative cover to the door. Each of the left and right slides moves synchronously between raised and lowered positions as the decorative cover moves relative to the door.

Yet another embodiment comprises a method of moving a decorative cover of a dishwasher door. The method comprises the step of rotating the dishwasher door from a closed to an opened position. As the dishwasher door is rotated, synchronously moving of opposing vertical sides of the decorative cover from a retracted position to an extended position prevent racking of the decorative cover.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

In the drawings:

FIG. **1** is a perspective view of a dishwasher.

FIG. **2** is a side view of the bottom front of the dishwasher of FIG. **1**, showing a rotatable arm mounted to the bottom of the door.

FIG. **3** is a dishwasher door in accordance with FIG. **1** illustrating upper and lower slide assemblies for mounting a decorative cover on the dishwasher door.

FIG. **4** illustrates another embodiment of a dishwasher door illustrating upper and lower slide assemblies and a gear train for mounting a decorative cover on the dishwasher door.

FIG. **5** is a perspective view of a dishwasher in another embodiment showing upper and lower slide assemblies and dampers for mounting a decorative cover on the dishwasher door.

FIG. **6** is a top view of the dishwasher of FIG. **5** showing the door in an open position with the decorative cover extended.

FIG. **7** is a side view of the bottom front of the embodiment of FIG. **6**, showing detail of an adjustable arm.

DESCRIPTION

In exemplary embodiments of the disclosure, a dishwashing appliance has a dishwasher door with a non-racking decorative cover mounted thereon. The bottom of the decorative cover extends below the door, near the floor when the dishwasher door is closed. The decorative cover is slidingly mounted to the door and configured to slide as the door is opened (i.e., as the door moves from its closed position to its opened position) such that the bottom of the decorative cover moves (extends) toward the top of the door. Movement of the decorative cover prevents the bottom of the decorative cover from contacting the floor or the lower part of the dishwasher chassis when the door is opened. The decorative cover is also configured to slide back or retract when the door is closed (i.e., when the door moves from its opened position to its closed position) such that the bottom of the decorative cover moves (retracts) away from the top of the door, toward the floor. The decorative cover is arranged to retract enough so the bottom of the decorative cover is proximate the floor when the door is closed. The decorative cover can be mounted to the door with a plurality of sliders the synchronously move and stabilize the decorative cover relative to the door and to prevent it from twisting, turning, or jamming. There are a variety of ways to slidingly mount the non-racking decorative cover to the door, as will be described.

Generally, as shown in FIG. **1**, an automated dishwasher **10** includes a decorative cover **19** slidingly mounted to a door **18**. The dishwasher **10** shares many features of a conventional automated dishwasher, which will not be described in detail herein except as necessary for a complete understanding of the invention. An open-faced tub **14** can be provided within a chassis **12** and can at least partially define treating chamber **16**, having an access opening **15** for washing dishes. A door **18** can be movably mounted to the dishwasher **10** for movement between opened and closed positions to selectively open and close the access opening **15** of the tub **14**. Thus, the door **18** provides accessibility to the treating chamber **16** for the loading and unloading of dishes or other washable items. It should be appreciated that the door **18** can be secured to the lower front edge of the chassis **12** or to the lower front edge of the tub **14** via a hinge **23** (shown in FIG. **2**) configured to pivot the door **18**.

FIG. **2** is a side view of the bottom front of the dishwasher door **18** shown in a closed position, where the door **18** is hingedly coupled to chassis **12** by hinge **23** (shown in

phantom). Decorative cover **19** is slidably coupled to door **18**, and extends downward past the bottom of door **18** to near the floor (F) in a lowered position. The dishwasher **10** can include a tie **17** to move the decorative cover **19** with respect to the door **18**. The tie **17** can be a string, rope, wire, monofilament line, or the like. One end of the tie **17** can be fixedly attached at one end to plate **21**, which in turn is fixedly attached to chassis **12**. An arm **24** can be fixedly coupled at one end to door **18** at or near hinge **23**. A pulley **22***a* is affixed to arm **24** or door **18** concentric with hinge **23**. The other (distal) end of arm **24** is spaced apart from the inside surface of door **18**, and another pulley **22***b* can be affixed to the distal end of the arm **24**.

FIG. **3** is a partial front view of a surface of the dishwasher door **18**. The door **18** has two upper slide assemblies **20** and two lower slide assemblies **30** which can be positioned between the decorative cover **19** and the door **18**, and mounted to one or both of the decorative cover **19** and door **18**. The two upper slide assemblies **20** can be horizontally aligned, or the two lower slide assemblies **30** can be horizontally aligned, or both. In other words, while not required, it is contemplated that four slider assemblies **20**, **30** can attach to the decorative cover **19** to synchronously move and stabilize the decorative cover **19** relative to the door **18** and to prevent it from twisting, turning, or jamming. The term "non-racking" is used herein to mean that twisting, turning, and jamming of decorative cover **19** is prevented as decorative cover **19** moves relative to the door **18**.

The upper slide assemblies **20** are made up of a left upper slide assembly **20***a* and a right upper slide assembly **20***b*. Each upper slide assembly **20***a*, **20***b* is generally identical in nature. Each upper slide assembly **20***a*, **20***b* comprises a slider **28** which moves on a slide track **29** which is fixedly coupled to door **18**. The slider **28** is fixedly coupled to decorative cover **19** to allow the decorative cover **19** to move relative to the door **18**. Each upper slide assembly **20***a*, **20***b* also has a damper or compression spring **27** that is affixed to door **18** at or near the top of slide track **29**. The other end of spring **27** is affixed to slider **28**.

Similarly, the lower slide assemblies **30** are made up of a left lower slide assembly **30***a* and a right lower slide assembly **30***b*. Each lower slide assembly **30***a* and **30***b* is generally identical in nature. Each lower slide assembly **30***a*, **30***b* comprises a slider **25** which moves on a slide track **26** which is fixedly coupled to door **18**. The slider **25** is fixedly coupled to decorative cover **19** to also allow the decorative cover **19** to move relative to the door **18**. The other end of tie **17** is affixed to slider **25** at or near the bottom of slide track **26**. The tie **17** can extend from the slider **25** over pulley's **22***c*, **22***d* and can extend around pulley **22***a* and pulley **22***b* and fixedly attached at end plate **21** (as shown in FIG. **2**).

In operation, when the door **18** is closed, arm **24** is generally perpendicular to the inside surface of door **18**. The arm **24** rotates about hinge **23** as the door **18** pivots, moving the arm **24** from a generally horizontal position to a generally vertical position as the door **18** is opened. This causes the pulley **22***a* at the distal end of arm **24** to describe an arc around hinge **23**, which pushes upward on tie **17** and causes a pulling force at the other end of tie **17** attached to slider **25**. As the end of tie **17** pulls on slider **25**, slider **25** is pulled up slide rack **26**, which pulls decorative cover **19** to its extended position as door **18** moves from its closed position to its open position. Further, as door **18** is opened and slider **25** pulls decorative cover **19** to its extended position, slider **28** on upper slide assemblies **20** is also pulled in the upward direction, compressing spring **27** and causing it to push down on slider **28**.

Conversely, when the door **18** is moved from the open position to the closed position, the arm **24** rotates about hinge **23** as the door **18** pivots, moving the arm **24** from a generally vertical position back to a generally horizontal position as the door **18** is closed. This causes the pulley **22***a* at the distal end of arm **24** to arc down relative to hinge **23**. This would cause tie **17** to slack except that slider **28** is pushed down by the action of compression spring **27**, thus taking up any slack. As a result, slider **28** pushes down on decorative cover **19**, which pushes down on slider **25**, and the decorative cover **19** returns to its retracted or lowered position.

It should be noted that non-racking stability of the movement of decorative cover **19** with respect to door **18** is enhanced because both ties **17** of lower slide assemblies **30** pull up on sliders **25** with equal force, and both springs **27** of upper slide assemblies **20** push down on sliders **28** with equal force, thus all four slider assemblies **20**, **30** help stabilize movement of the decorative cover **19** with respect to door **18**. In addition, it should be noted that the various springs **27**, ties **17**, and other elements of each slide assembly are not limited to the illustrations. The upper and lower slide assemblies **20**, **30** could be reversed or the springs **27**, ties **17**, and other elements could be designed to be housed in one or more slide assemblies.

FIG. **4** shows an alternate embodiment of a dishwasher door **118** that has similarities with the dishwasher door **18** of FIGS. **2** & **3**. Therefore, elements of the dishwasher door **118** that are similar to the dishwasher door **18** are labeled with similar part numbers using the prefix **100**. Like the dishwasher door **18**, the dishwasher door **118** comprises two upper slide assemblies **120** and two lower slide assemblies **130** for moving decorative cover **119** with respect to door **118**.

The upper slide assemblies **120** are made up of a left upper slide assembly **120***a* and a right upper slide assembly **120***b*. Each upper slide assembly **120***a*, **120***b* comprises a slider **128** which moves on a slide track **129** which is fixedly coupled to door **118**. The slider **128** is fixedly coupled to decorative cover **119** to allow the decorative cover **19** to move relative to the door **118**.

The lower slide assemblies **130** are made up of a left lower slide assembly **130***a* and a right lower slide assembly **130***b*. Each lower slide assembly **130***a*, **130***b* comprises a slider **125** which moves on a slide track **126** which is fixedly coupled to door **118**. The slider **125** is fixedly coupled to decorative cover **119** to also allow the decorative cover **119** to move relative to the door **118**.

The dishwasher door **118** can also carry gear train **105** fixedly connecting lower left slide assembly **130***a* and lower right slide assembly **130***b*. The gear train **105** can comprise center rack **100**, which is the driving force of the gear train **105**. Pinion gear **110** is fixedly attached to concentric gear **115** having a greater radius than pinion gear **110**. Connecting gear **130** can be positioned between concentric gear **115** and side rack **140**. Side rack **140** is fixedly coupled to slider **125**, which slides upward in slide track **126**. Slider **125** is fixedly coupled to decorative cover **119**. It is contemplated the gears **110**/**115**, and **130** rotate about respective pins located at their respective axes of rotation, and the pins are fixedly coupled to door **118** and are configured to hold gears **110**, **115**, **130** in place.

The bottom of center rack **100** is operatively coupled to a stationary point **180** on the chassis **112** indicated by a

triangle. Stationary point **180** is offset from the door's axis of rotation such that center rack **100** is pushed up and pulled down as the door is opened and closed, respectively. Stationary point **180** can be, for example, a distal end of an arm (not shown) fixedly mounted to chassis **112**. In an embodiment, intermediate bar **170** is used to couple stationary point **180** to center rack **100**. As shown, the top end of intermediate bar **170** is pivotally coupled to the bottom end of center rack **100**, and the bottom end of intermediate bar **170** is pivotally coupled to stationary point **180**.

In operation, as the door **118** is opened, intermediate bar **170** is pushed against the stationary point **180** on chassis **112**, thus causing center rack **100** to move upward. Pinion gear **110** converts the linear motion of center rack **100** into rotational motion, in the clockwise direction on the right side, and counterclockwise on the left side. Concentric gear **115** drives connecting gear **130** in a counter-clockwise direction on the right side and clockwise on the left side. Connecting gear **130** drives side rack **140** upward. Side rack **140** being fixedly coupled to slider **125**, pushes slider **125** upward in slide track **126**, thereby pushing decorative cover **119** to its extended position when the door is moved from its closed position to its open position.

Conversely, as the door **118** is closed, intermediate bar **170** is against the stationary point **180** on chassis **112**, thus causing center rack **100** to move downward. As the center rack **100** is moved downward, pinion gear **110** converts the linear motion of center rack **100** into rotational motion in the counterclockwise direction on the right side and clockwise on the left side. Concentric gear **115** drives connecting gear **130** in a clockwise direction on the right side and counterclockwise on the left side. Connecting gear **130** drives side rack **140** downward. Side rack **140** causes slider **125** to move downward in slide track **126**, thereby pulling decorative cover **119** to its retracted position.

In the illustrated embodiment, a 25 mm movement of the center rack **100** is caused by an offset of 25 mm between the stationary point **180** and the door's axis of rotation, although other offsets can be used to provide greater or lesser movement of the center rack **100**. Moreover, the ratios of the radii of gears **110**/**115**, and **130** are such that a 25 mm movement of the center rack **100** causes an 80 mm movement in side racks **140** and in decorative cover **119**. However, other gear radii ratios can alternatively be used to cause a lesser or greater movement of side racks **140** and decorative cover **119**.

FIG. **5** shows an alternate embodiment of a dishwasher door **218** that has also similarities with the dishwasher door **18** of FIGS. **2** & **3**. Therefore, elements of the dishwasher door **218** that are similar to the dishwasher door **18** are labeled with similar part numbers using the prefix **200**. Like the dishwasher door **18**, the dishwasher door **218** comprises two upper slide assemblies **220** and two lower slide assemblies **230** for moving decorative cover **219** with respect to door **218**.

As in the other embodiments, the upper slide assemblies **220** are made up of a left upper slide assembly **220***a* and a right upper slide assembly **220***b*. Each upper slide assembly **220***a*, **220***b* comprises a slider **228** which moves on a slide track **229** which is fixedly coupled to door **218**. Each upper slide assembly **220***a*, **220***b* can comprise a piston-type damper **240** with a casing **242** mounted to one of the door **218** or the slider **228** and a reciprocating piston shaft **244** mounted to the other of the door **218** or slider **228**.

The lower slide assemblies **230** are made up of a left lower slide assembly **230***a* and a right lower slide assembly **230***b*. Once again, each lower slide assembly **230***a*, **230***b* comprises a slider **225** which moves on a slide track **226** which is fixedly coupled to door **218**. Each lower slide assembly **230***a*, **230***b* has a slider **225** affixed to one end of a respective tie **217**. Each tie **217** can then follows a path around a pulley's **222***a*, **222***b*, around adjustable arm **224** carrying pulley **222***c* and affix to dishwasher chassis **212**.

FIG. **6** shows a partial view the door **218** of FIG. **5** after it has been moved to an open position. As shown, tie **217** is fixedly attached at one end to slider **225** of lower slide assembly **230***a*, which in turn is affixed to decorative cover **219**. Tie **217** can run through pulleys **222***a*, **222***b* and **222***c* (shown in FIG. **5**) and can be fixedly attached to the chassis **212** near the door hinge **223**. Slider **225** slides along a slide track **226** and is fixedly attached to door **218**.

In operation, when the door **218** is in the closed position, the damper **240** is compressed and has a natural tendency to push up on the slider **228**. Tie **217** is taut and holds slider **225** in place, preventing the damper from pushing slider **228** upward. As the door is opened, adjustable arm **224** pivots around hinge **223**, which would cause tie **217** to slack except that damper **240** is pushing up on slider **228**, which pushes up slider **255**, taking up any slack. Thus as damper **240** pushes slider **228** upward, decorative cover **219** is moved to its extended position as door **218** is opened.

Conversely, when the door **218** is moved from the open position to the closed position, the tie **217** pulls decorative cover **219** back to its retracted position. As the door **218** is closed, arm **224** pivots around hinge **223**, moving the adjustable arm **224** from a generally horizontal position when the door **218** is open to a generally vertical position when door **218** is closed. As door **218** is closed, the distal end of adjustable arm **224** pushes down on tie **217** near its point of attachment to chassis **212**. This causes the other end of the tie **217** to pull slider **225** down, thereby pulling decorative cover **219** also affixed to slider **228** to its retracted position.

FIG. **7** is a side view of the dishwasher **10** of FIG. **6** showing the adjustable arm **224**. The distance from the bottom of door **218** to the distal end of arm **224** can be adjusted by removing a cotter pin, bolt, or other removable attachment means that secures arm **224** to the bottom of door **218**. Adjustable arm **224** can then be moved up or down to a more favored position, and the attachment means can be used again to secure adjustable arm **224** in its new position to door **218**. In this manner, the distance decorative cover **219** extends and retracts can be easily adjusted. In an exemplary operation, a long decorative cover **219** (e.g., 800 mm) can be installed on a shorter standard door (e.g., 720 mm). The long decorative cover can be used to improve the appearance of a dishwasher door, installed flashing, a plinth, or the like in a standard dishwasher. In an exemplary embodiment the distance decorative cover **219** moves between its extended position and its retracted position can be adjusted in a range from about 15 mm to about 85 mm.

Although the invention has been described and illustrated in exemplary forms with a certain degree of particularity, it is noted that the description and illustrations have been made by way of example only. Numerous changes in the details of construction, combination, and arrangement of parts and steps can be made without deviating from the scope of the invention. Accordingly, such changes are understood to be inherent in the disclosure. The invention is not limited except by the appended claims and the elements explicitly recited therein. The scope of the claims should be construed as broadly as the prior art will permit. It should also be noted that all elements of all of the claims can be combined with

each other in any possible combination, even if the combinations have not been expressly recited or claimed.

What is claimed is:

1. A dishwasher comprising:

a chassis having a base;

a tub supported on the base and at least partially defining a treating chamber having an access opening;

a door having a door height extending between a door upper end and a door lower end;

a hinge pivotally mounting the door to the chassis for pivotal movement between a closed position, wherein the access opening is closed, and an opened position, wherein the access opening is opened;

a non-racking decorative cover having a cover height extending between a cover upper end and a cover lower end; and

a slide assembly mounting the decorative cover to the door to move the decorative cover upwardly from a retracted position to an extended position as the door is pivoted from the closed position to the open position; the slide assembly comprising a tie having an first end, at least one upper slide assembly comprising a spring and at least one lower slide assembly comprising a first end of the tie; the at least one lower slide assembly also comprising a slider moveable on a slide track;

wherein the decorative cover height is greater than the door height such that the decorative cover lower end lies below the door lower end supporting the dishwasher when the door is in the closed position such that extending the decorative cover prevents the decorative cover lower end from contacting the chassis when the door is moved from the closed to the open position.

2. The dishwasher of claim **1** wherein the slide assembly includes a left slide mounting a left side of the decorative cover to the door and a right slide spaced apart from the left slide and mounting a right side of the decorative cover to the door.

3. The dishwasher of claim **2** wherein the left slide is a lower left slide that mounts the lower left side of the decorative cover and the right slide is a lower right slide that mounts the lower right side of the decorative cover.

4. The dishwasher of claim **3** further comprising an upper left slide mounting an upper left side of decorative cover to the door and an upper right slide spaced apart from the upper left slide and mounting an upper right side of the decorative cover to the door.

5. The dishwasher of claim **2** wherein the tie applies a pulling force to one of the left or right slides and wherein the spring biases the one of the left or right slides against the pulling force.

6. The dishwasher of claim **2** further comprising a rotatably arm and wherein rotational movement of the arm pulls one of the left or right slides to the extended position.

7. The dishwasher of claim **1** wherein the first end of the tie is affixed to the slider.

8. The dishwasher of claim **7** further comprising a pulley positioned above the slider.

9. The dishwasher of claim **8** wherein the tie comprises a second end and having a length between the first and second ends.

10. The dishwasher of claim **9** wherein the second end of the tie connects to the chassis.

11. The dishwasher of claim **1** wherein the spring is a compression spring.

12. A dishwasher comprising:

a chassis having a base;

a tub supported on the base and at least partially defining a treating chamber having an access opening;

a door having a door height extending between a door upper end and a door lower end;

a hinge pivotally mounting the door to the chassis for pivotal movement between a closed position, wherein the access opening is closed, and an opened position, wherein the access opening is opened;

a non-racking decorative cover having a cover height extending between a cover upper end and a cover lower end; and

at least two slide assemblies mounting the decorative cover to the door to move the decorative cover upwardly from a retracted position to an extended position as the door is pivoted from the closed position to the open position; the at least two slide assemblies comprising at least one upper slide assembly comprising a compression spring and at least two lower slide assemblies comprising a tie and a slider moveable on a slide track; wherein a first end of the tie of each of the at least two lower slide assemblies is attached to the slider of each of two lower slide assemblies;

wherein the decorative cover height is greater than the door height such that the decorative cover lower end lies below the door lower end supporting the dishwasher when the door is in the closed position such that extending the decorative cover prevents the decorative cover lower end from contacting the chassis when the door is moved from the closed to the open position.

13. The dishwasher of claim **12** wherein the at least one upper slide assembly comprises two upper slide assemblies.

14. The dishwasher of claim **13** wherein each of the upper slide assemblies comprises a slider movable on a slide track and the compression spring is attached to the slider.

15. The dishwasher of claim **14** wherein the two upper slide assemblies and the two lower slide assemblies are positioned in the door for carrying the decorative cover.

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